

Native Americans are at greater risk for complications from influenza, including H1N1.

Persons with preexisting, underlying medical conditions have an enhanced risk for serious reactions to influenza. Native Americans are subject to higher rates of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, asthma and renal disease than the general population which puts them at greater risk for serious complications from influenza. The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services reports that influenza and H1N1 vaccines are currently available at county health and Indian health services.

Vaccination and early intervention is particularly important for Native Americans because of the risk of complications. Prevention and control relies on the same strategy that has been promoted for several months: wash hands, stay home when ill, vaccination, and early treatment. Please do what you can to encourage all students, staff and families to take advantage of the influenza vaccines available in your community.